incentivise States to invest and re-orient the current agricultural development strategies. In addition, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for wheat has also been enhanced to Rs. 1,000/- per quintal for Rabi marketing season 2008-09 to encourage the farmers to grow more wheat for Paddy, the MSP has been fixed at Rs.850/- and Rs.880/- per quintal for Common and Grade-A varieties, respectively for kharif marketing season 2008-09 with the similar objectives. Further, while imposing a ban on Wheat and non-Basmati Rice export and permitting Wheat and Rice import at zero duty, the gap between demand and supply is contained.

Discontinuation of import of semen for betterment of the breed of animals

†1255. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the import of semen for betterment of the breed of animals has been discontinued; and

(b) if so, from which date and reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Steps for quality crops and protection from weeds

†1256. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH:
SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that crops grown in farms are found to be wanting in nutritious elements and also whether weeds are detrimental to both the crops and the health;

(b the effective steps being taken by Government for quality crops and protection from weeds; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Plan to increase milk production

1257. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to launch a National Dairy Plan to increase milk production to reach a level of 160 to 180 million tons by 2021;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether a national conference of State Ministers of Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development was held at New Delhi in the month of September this year;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi